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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, Sept. 16, 1931.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "A Simple Meal for Company." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics and the Bureau of Animal Industry, U.S.D.A. Extract from Good Housekeeping Magazine.

Bulletins available: "Boning Lamb Cuts", and "Lamb as You Like It."

--ooOoc--

Let's begin with the menu today, because we have a very good one and I need plenty of time to talk about it. Our meal today is a mid-week company dinner. Not a fancy meal but an extra good one.

And the best item on the bill of fare is roast stuffed shoulder of lamb with mint or watercress stuffing. To go with that roast we're having peas, carrots and creamed celery. But the Menu Specialist didn't mention potatoes. With the stuffing in the roast, you see, potatoes really aren't necessary-- unless, of course, your guests or your family are especially addicted to them.

Take your pencils please and we'll write this simple company dinner. Roast stuffed shoulder of lamb with mint or watercress stuffing; Buttered peas and carrots; Creamed celery; Fresh pear salad on lettuce with grated sharp cheese; Layer cake; and Coffee.

Lamb shoulder is one of the most economical lamb cuts and, if it is prepared as it should be, makes a most delicious roast. Its one handicap is the irregularly shaped bones which run through it and make carving difficult. But it is quite possible to get around this handicap. Have the piece boned, and stuff it before roasting. Uncle Ebenezer maintains that a shoulder roast fixed this way beats even a leg of lamb for flavor.

By the way, there is a good deal to be said for removing the bones in many lamb cuts before roasting them. Boned and stuffed roasts are easier to carve. In the second place, the slices may be cut the entire length of the roast. No bones to run into. And, finally, boned roasts can be filled with tasty stuffing which makes them go farther than unboned cuts. Not only the shoulder of lamb, but also the leg, loin and breast can be successfully boned and stuffed for roasting. And, as I said, roasts prepared this way are a lot easier on the carver and often go farther.

The recipe for the roast is in your lamb leaflet. Page six, please. Let's read it over together. If you haven't a leaflet, you can jot down the



directions as we read.

Select a shoulder of lamb weighing 3 to 4 pounds. Have the butcher remove the bones and the fell. But don't let him throw these bones away. No. Have them wrapped up with the meat and take them home for --Oh, no, Arabella. You're quite mistaken. I wasn't thinking of taking them home for the dog--even your dog, which, I understand, is one of the nicest dogs in the world. I was about to suggest using those bones for soup making.

A boned lamb shoulder may be stuffed, and either left flat for roasting or rolled up. The flat shoulder--as you'll notice from the picture at the bottom of page 6--this flat shoulder is easier to sew up than the rolled roast. And the pocket holds twice as much stuffing. Either of these completely boned stuffed shoulders can be carved straight through in attractive slices of part meat and part stuffing.

Now for the details of stuffing and roasting the meat after the butcher has boned it. First, wipe the meat with a damp cloth. Second, sprinkle the inside of the pocket with salt and pepper. Third, pile the hot stuffing in the pocket lightly and then sew the edges together.

Now rub salt, pepper and flour over the outside. And, if the covering of fat is very thin, several strips of bacon laid over the top will help. There's all there is to getting the roast ready for the oven.

Now to cook it. Place the roast on a rack in an open pan without water. Sear it for thirty minutes in a hot oven. The proper temperature is 480 degrees F. If you have strips of bacon over the meat, however, the time of searing will have to be shorter or the meat will get too brown. When it is seared, reduce the temperature of the oven to 300 degrees F. and cook the meat at this temperature until tender.

How long will it take? Well, according to the recipe, a medium-sized stuffed shoulder will take from two and a half to three hours at these temperatures. When the roast is done, lift it out onto a hot platter and make a brown gravy from the juice left in the pan.

The stuffing? I'm just coming to that. Mint or watercress stuffing. I hope the lady who wrote for a new and unusual way to make stuffing is listening in today, for this recipe is just what she wants, I'm sure. Did I say recipe? Beg pardon. This lady is from New Hampshire and like all the other born and bred New England housekeepers that I ever met, she used the word rule instead of recipe.

So here's the rule for the stuffing. The ingredients number seven.

3 cups of fine dry bread crumbs  
1/2 cup of fresh mint leaves, or 1 and 1/2 cups of finely cut watercress leaves  
and stems  
6 tablespoons of butter or other fat  
3 tablespoons of chopped celery  
1 and 1/2 tablespoons of chopped onion  
3/4 teaspoon of salt, and  
a dash of pepper

Shall I read those over again? (Repeat)





First you melt the butter in a skillet, and then you add the onion and the celery. Cook these for a few minutes and then add the mint leaves -- or the finely cut watercress-- and the other seasonings. Stir these into the bread crumbs, and mix all the ingredients together. When using watercress, allow the liquid which cooks out of it to evaporate before the bread crumbs are added.

My, my, this is Wednesday and we've spent the whole time so far on food and haven't said one word about children. Here's a hint about making life safe for the children.

Wise parents have always known that if their children are to succeed in the world, they must never be filled with fears during childhood.

"But," protests one mother of my acquaintance, "how can I teach my children to avoid danger without teaching them fears?"

There's a difference between caution and fear. And caution is well worth teaching. As soon as a child starts out from home to school he needs to know how to look after himself. If he acquires habits of safety when he is very young he will feel safe and because he knows how to be safe. Whether it is crossing the street, or doing other things that may involve any hazard, children should be taught what to do and when and how to do it. Making children afraid does not protect them, but making them careful does.

A father or mother either can begin teaching safe habits by doing things with his children. For example, he can take the two-year-old with him across the street and let him show you how he can look for things in both directions, and give you the signal to start when it is safe. After he has had practice in taking precautions under guidance, he will be able to act on his own responsibility-- but not until then.

As for the lively boy in his teens, who wants attention and boasts that he has done something obviously foolhardy and got away with it--he needs to be taught that this is not bravery nor courage. It will not be hard to show him that his own heroes--Colonel Lindbergh, for example--achieved what they did by taking every possible precaution before starting out on their great adventures.

Tomorrow: Home gardeners will please be on hand. W.R.B.'s advice on planting bulbs for spring is ready.

And Friday, we'll answer some canning questions and talk about a chicken casserole dinner for Sunday.

